uncomfortable in the presence of card-playing, theatre-going clergy and suspected or 'proven' atheists, such as Adam Smith and David Hume. Rush, ironically, admired Hume and disliked Robertson. The latter was, he wrote, 'a haughty prelate' and the 'Patron and open advocate of all irreligious clergymen'. Hume, on the other hand, despite being a notorious infidel, was 'a Gentleman of the most amiable private Character, and much beloved by every Body that knows him'.[32] Rush read Hume's *History of England* and, when he served on the Continental Congress's Committee of Inspection in 1776, he made use of Hume's argument against price control.[33] Later, in a letter to John Adams, he explained that it was not his classical studies but his emulation of Hume (and Swift) which had most influenced his mature writing style.[34]

Rush enjoyed many activities in Edinburgh apart from those directly associated with his medical studies. He spent part of his summer vacation improving his Latin and he hired tutors to teach him Spanish, Italian, French and mathematics. He also joined a club of young republicans and sought the company of evangelical clergymen, the most important of whom was John Witherspoon of Paisley. It was Rush who persuaded Witherspoon to take up the sixth presidency of the College of New Jersey after the death of his uncle, Samuel Finley. Acting on behalf of the college trustees, Rush convinced the reluctant clergyman, and his even more reluctant wife, to leave their native country. In 1767 he wrote a letter to Witherspoon in which he suggested that the future prospects of a man who could turn down a post such as the one he had been offered at Princeton would be very gloomy indeed, and that he might well end his days 'possessed of talents not employed, censured ... unknown, unadmired'.[35] In a youthful style obviously not yet influenced by Humean restraint, he closed this letter with an outburst of passion which he attributed to unbounded zeal for his *alma mater*. He wrote:

> Suffer me to conjure you by everything you look upon as sacred not to refuse the call, if you have any regard to religion, to your family, and to your own private happiness. Let not the College with her last breath proclaim you as the cause of her dissolution. Let not the enemies of the College triumph over her dejected, heartbroken friends. Every tear they shed and every pang of grief they feel will be felt by you. O! *Nassau-Hall, Nassau-Hall!* in vain rescued and cherished by every lover of religion, since thou art now to fall into the hands of some – But I cannot express it – my heart bleeds within me – O Nassau-Hall, Nassau-Hall![36]

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Perhaps because of, but more likely despite, Rush's impassioned pleas, Witherspoon finally agreed to accept the appointment. Witherspoon's presidency of Princeton significantly shaped the development of America's religious, educational and political institutions.

In 1768 Rush completed his thesis on the digestion of food in the stomach and was subsequently admitted to the degree of Doctor of Medicine. His dissertation, described by one contemporary as 'an accurate and ingenious performance presented with lucidity',[37] was published soon afterward as a thirty-page pamphlet. The principal dedication was, with good reason, to his patron Dr Franklin, that 'worthy delegate to the Britannic Court, known far and wide'.[38]

London, Paris and Philadelphia

On the completion of his medical degree, Rush travelled south with the intention of polishing his practical skills in the great London hospitals. He studied anatomy and dissection with Dr William Hunter, Cullen's brilliant protégé, and his assistant, Dr William Hewson, and walked the wards of Middlesex and St Thomas's hospitals. Through one of his mentors at St Thomas's, he met Mark Akenside, the poet and doctor, and Sir John Pringle. Pringle promptly invited him to join a medical conversation party held weekly at his home. One member of this group was the eminent Quaker physician, John Coakley Lettsom, with whom Rush was to maintain a life-long correspondence.[39] Letters from Philadelphia friends brought him into the circle of another influential Quaker, Dr John Fothergill, a close friend of Franklin and many American physicians. Rush's correspondence leaves no doubt that he profited enormously from his connection with Franklin, whose patronage guaranteed him, as it had in Edinburgh, immediate entry into London's scientific and literary establishments. Through men such as Pringle and Fothergill, Rush also came into contact with a variety of Dissenting luminaries, including Joseph Priestley and Richard Price, who were later to become his close friends and correspondents.

Franklin's good auspices also brought him into the circle of the American-born painter, Benjamin West, and his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Rush even dined with Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith at Reynolds' table and, soon afterwards, met the infamous subject of the dinner's conversation, the radical John Wilkes, who was then, as Rush put it, 'expiating some political offense', in the King's Bench prison. Far from being the 'monster of

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immorality' Rush expected, Wilkes was, he noted, interesting, agreeable and well-bred.[40] Of even greater interest to Rush, however, was the historian Catharine Macaulay and her circle of well-known republicans and Whigs.[41]

His education was a promising introduction to the world of medicine as well as to that of the republican politics into which he was to be plunged on his return to Philadelphia. It was also one which he prolonged by setting out for a brief visit to Paris. Here again, Rush's passport to the intellectual society he sought was provided by his generous patron, Franklin, who also offered 'a credit upon a Banker in Paris for two or three hundred guineas' in the event of unexpected expenses. This act of 'paternal friendship' forged a bond which, according to Rush, attached him to the great man for the rest of his life and thereafter to the members of his family.[42]

In Paris Rush entered the circles of the philosophers and physiocrats whose company Franklin frequented. He met Jacques Barbeu Dubourg, a disciple of Franklin, a Republican, and one of the earliest French spokesmen for American rights. He also met Jean Baptiste Le Roy, a member of the Académie des Sciences; Jean-Joseph Sue, anatomist; Abbé Nollet, natural philosopher; Bernard de Jussieu, botanist to the king; Diderot; and the Marquis de Mirabeau, whose weekly coterie he was invited to attend. He related in his Paris journal that Diderot entertained him in his library and gave him a letter to deliver to Hume when he got back to London.[43]

Like many other Edinburgh-trained physicians at the time, Rush inspected the great public hospitals of Paris. He observed that the Hôtel de la Charité was orderly and clean and that the nurses were nuns from noble families. The Hôtel-Dieu, however, he disparaged for being so crowded (the ill, he noted, lay four to a bed) and offensive. He was not impressed with the state of French medicine and claimed with confidence that it was fifty years behind that of the British.[44]

Having gratified his curiosity to its 'greatest extent', Rush left Paris in the spring of 1769 to make preparations for his journey home to Philadelphia.[45] During the long and tedious sea voyage, he occupied himself by reading the first three books of Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* and Foster's *Crown Law.* As George Corner, the editor of Rush's *Autobiography,* has pointed out, this would have made Rush a very early American reader of the *Commentaries* as the text had only begun to appear in 1765. He later wrote that it was largely to the reading of these books that he owed

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his relish for political science at the beginning of the American Revolution.[46]

This brief outline of Rush's early life, drawn from some of the immensely rich resources available to scholars, will hopefully be sufficient to indicate those general features of his education which he shared with Gregory and Percival and to indicate also the particular circumstances of American intellectual and religious life that played an important part in the development of his ideas. Like his British counterparts, Rush was educated by Presbyterian clergymen, an education which carried with it certain explicit assumptions about the importance of a liberal education to a Christian society and the duties of those who benefited from this education.

The influence of Rush's Scottish education on the development of his medical (and political) ideas is indisputable. As his letters and memoirs testify, it was his expressed intention to help make Philadelphia 'the Edinburgh of America'.[47] He had fond memories of his happy sojourn there and at the end of his life he wrote that:

> there is at present no spot upon the earth where religion, science and literature combine more to produce moral and intellectual pleasures than in the metropolis of Scotland.[48]

Scotland remained for him a kind of intellectual and spiritual beacon. Though he never returned, he carefully nurtured the relationships he had formed there with William Cullen and other influential Scottish thinkers, including Sir John Pringle, Lord Kames and James Beattie. Throughout his life he corresponded with an extensive network of Edinburgh medical graduates such as Thomas Percival, John Aikin Jr, Andrew Duncan, John Bostock, John Haslam, John Coakley Lettsom, John Currie, John Howard and John Fothergill. This was, as we have seen, the same group of British physicians and medical reformers with whom Percival and other Dissenting physicians were intimately associated. When Rush returned to Philadelphia he set out to build a private practice and to establish himself in the Chair of Chemistry offered to him by John Morgan at the College of Philadelphia. He also became involved in the abolition movement led by the Quaker Anthony Benezet and successfully solicited support from his friend Barbeu Dubourg in Paris and Granville Sharp in London.

It should be noted that Rush's choice of public and philanthropic activities also marked him as one of Cullen's men. Like Percival and his medical colleagues, he devoted much of his professional life to the creation or reform of educational and

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philanthropic institutions. He played a prominent role in the hospital, asylum and dispensary movements, the movement for sanitary reform, and the reform of military hospitals. He was one of the chief American supporters, first of the Suttonian method of smallpox inoculation and then of the vaccination developed by Edward Jenner.[49] Like Percival, Rush was to witness the human devastation wrought by large-scale epidemics and, like him, entered into the heated public and political controversies surrounding the question of their origins and means of eradication.[50] Throughout his career he took it as one of his chief tasks to bring 'the principles, morals and manners' of American citizens into conformity with republican institutions. For him, medicine was, like good government and the Christian religion, an inherently republican enterprise.

In view of the intimate link he found between politics and medicine, it is hardly surprising that revolution in one sphere led to drastic change in the other. On his return to Philadelphia, Rush practised and taught the system of medicine he had learned from the lectures and publications of William Cullen, but in the course of many years of practice he gradually discovered errors and imperfections in Cullen's system. The new principles of his own system, however, came to him suddenly, in a kind of Lockean epiphany. The discovery was

> like a ferment introduced into my mind. It produced in it a constant endless succession of decompositions and new arrangements of facts and ideas upon medical subjects.[51]

But it was a ferment with its roots in politics:

> To the activity induced in my faculties by the evolution of my republican principles by the part I took in the American Revolution, I ascribe in a great measure the disorganization of my old principles in medicine. The same republican ferment produced similar commotions and I hope a similar precipitation of the feculencies of error, upon the subjects of education, penal laws and capital punishments, upon each of which I published a number of essays in the American Museum, the Columbian Magazine, and other periodical works.[52]

In all this intellectual and practical activity, Rush pursued his chosen goals with appalling energy.

> He wrote dozens of public letters, broadsides, and pamphlets attacking strong drink, slavery, war, capital punishment, public punishments, test laws, tobacco, oaths, and even country fairs; and,

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> on the other hand, advocating beer and cider, free schools, education for women, a college for the Pennsylvania Germans, a national university, the study of science rather than Greek and Latin, free postage for newspapers, churches for Negroes, and the cultivation of the sugar-maple tree.[53]

To these activities we must add his contribution to the shaping of the new American government. He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and intimately associated with the composition of the famous pamphlet, *Common Sense*, written by Thomas Paine.[54] He campaigned for ratification of the constitution and he proposed the establishment of a cabinet post for a Secretary of Peace. As Rush himself admitted, he did not always succeed. In 1792 he even remarked to a friend that all his public enterprises had ended in 'disappointment and mortification' and that he suspected he had never done any good in the course of his life. He was, he wrote, only consoled by the fact that his intentions and aims were good ones and that, on the day of judgement, God would not be looking for his good and 'successful' servants but rather for his 'good and faithful' ones.[55]

Rush's radical medical doctrines and his messianic republicanism made him an irresistible target for many critics, the most notable of whom was the English writer, radical politician, and then Philadelphian journalist, William Cobbett. In his popular *Porcupine's Gazette*, Cobbett 'amused and gratified' all of Tory Philadelphia with his vicious satires on Rush. When his victim complained, Cobbett responded with a series of journal articles called the *Rush Light*, devoted exclusively to vilifying Rush and his supporters. Cobbett, who was hired by the Federalists in Philadelphia, attacked every aspect of Rush's public life. He referred to his pronouncements on the efficacy of bleeding as the 'preposterous puffs' of a republican quack, his writing as 'silly sans-cullotish stuff', and his blood-letting practices as 'one of those great discoveries that are made from time to time for the depopulation of the earth'.[56]

Despite the tumults of public and political life, Rush not only prospered in his practice but achieved, according to Butterfield, 'a reputation not surpassed by that of any other American physician for a century or more to come'.[57] In his last years he received the sort of adulation from his own students that he had given many years before to his teacher, William Cullen. 'Dr Rush', one of his students reported,

> looks like an angel of light, his words bear in them, and his looks too, irresistible persuasion and conviction: in fact, to me he seems more than mortal. If ever a human being deserved Deification, it is Dr Rush.[58]

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While he may not have achieved divinity, Rush did have many other personae, as his student and biographer, David Ramsay, noted in a eulogy of his teacher. There was Benjamin Rush the author, physician, and pioneer in American psychiatry, the republican philosopher, the patriot and associate of Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, and, of course, Benjamin Rush, the husband, father and private man.[59] First of all there was the teacher. In his forty years as a professor of medicine in Philadelphia, Rush imparted to approximately three thousand students his theory of medicine and with it a medical ethics designed to regulate the practice of a Christian physician in the new republic.

Rush did not write a treatise on medical ethics. He did, however, publish a number of the lectures that introduced his courses in chemistry and the Institutes and Practice of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. Together with his earlier and better-known lecture, *Observations on the Duties of a Physician*, they form an original and comprehensive contribution to the development of medical ethics. In these lectures he addressed most of the topics pursued by Gregory and Percival.[60] Like his predecessors, he believed that new medical knowledge and novel social circumstances warranted a re-examination of traditional duties. He emphasized, as Gregory and Percival had, both the importance of a proper education and adherence to the new scientific method. Rush's medical essays were, nevertheless, specifically addressed to American physicians. At the heart of his ethics was the ideal of the physician as a patriot and Christian republican. Most significantly, he argued that the duties of the American physician should no longer be confined to the knowledge and cure of disease but extended to include every aspect of health and virtue in the new republic. Because his account of the duties of the physician was so closely connected to his medical theories, particularly his science of the mind, we will briefly explore some of the implications of the latter for his account of medical duties.

Medical Science

Medicine and the Mind

A characteristic feature of Edinburgh medicine was its concern with the extent and nature of the interaction between mind and body. Both Gregory and Cullen insisted in their lectures on the theory of medicine that, in the words of Cullen, 'it is no less certain that the conditions of the mind do mutually affect the Body than the

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conditions of the Body do affect the Mind'.[61] This relationship was, they assumed, the cause of reciprocal 'sympathy' between the mind and different parts of the body, particularly between the mind and the nervous system.[62] In this view, the nervous system was the centre of all bodily force. All expressions of life originated from the energy of the brain and passed through the nervous system to the organs and muscles. Disease was the result of a malfunction in the brain that caused either tension or laxness throughout the body. For Cullen, all diseases were nervous diseases. Those, however, which caused sensory-motor disturbances were distinguished as neurosis, a term he was said to have coined.[63]

Cullen's doctrine of the nerves employed the concept of stimulus and response, or sensation and reaction.[64] The treatment of disease was chosen according to the physician's judgement as to whether nervous energy should be increased or diminished. Drugs, diet and exercise were all employed to restore energy and depletion treatments such as purging and bleeding were used to reduce it. The terminology Cullen used to describe the activity of the nervous system was derived from contemporary electrical experimentation. Just as electricity was excited by activity, the nervous system reacted to external stimuli. Life depended on the environment and the capacity of the nervous system to respond to external stimuli. For Cullen, there was an ascertainable quota of excitement of the nervous system which represented a healthy state. Deviations from the norm were viewed as disease, and death as the total absence of excitement. Under the heading of neurosis, in Cullen's nosology, appeared the various forms of insanity. Mania and melancholy, for example, were depicted as 'functions of the intensity or flow of nervous impulse', or of 'abnormal fluctuations of excitation'.[65] Cullen and his pupils, John Brown, Erasmus Darwin, and Benjamin Rush, all developed medical theories which effectively materialized or physiologized Locke's associationism,[66] and as Carleton argues, in the case of Rush, the metaphysical faculty psychology of Thomas Reid.[67]

The emergence of Cullen's 'neurology' had important medical and cultural consequences.[68] It encouraged new thinking about the body and consciousness which enlarged the map of mind–body relations. Whether actions or 'vital motions' such as blushing, respiration and the pulse were purposive or automatic was hotly debated. Mental abnormalities such as amnesia, compulsive behaviour, speech defects and sleep-walking were extensively explored. The study of unconscious action found its embodiment in

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literary characters such as Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy, Smollett's Matthew Bramble, Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield and, in America, Charles Brockden Brown's Edgar Huntley.

The doctrine of nerves also provided a new language of illness which, according to Roy Porter, replaced the older humoralism. As Porter explains, nerves had the advantage of being pleasantly situated – they pointed upwards to the brain, unlike the disturbed gut of the older theory which could not escape its association with human plumbing.[69] Nerves became increasingly fashionable and, for most of the eighteenth century, the preserve of the polite classes; their maintenance was the domain of the gentleman physician. Like contemporary medicine in general, neuroanatomy initially operated on the assumption that there was a difference in the mental or neural disturbance suffered by the higher and lower classes. Coarseness was an internal as well as visible feature of the poor and thus only the higher classes were considered to be sufficiently refined to suffer from a weakness of the nerves.

Like Cullen, Rush accepted that all animal life was the result of stimuli acting on some quality or substance which he took as God-given. He eventually concluded that all diseases were due to a single cause, a state of excessive excitability or disordered excitement. The blood vessels, he argued, not only transmitted excitement, but their convulsions were the proximate cause of all disease. For Rush, madness was caused by an irregular action of the arteries of the brain.[70] Although his medical therapy included most of the standard treatments, purging and bleeding were most prominent, even for cases of insanity.

Rush's new system was the basis for what he called his 'unitary theory of fever'. It was described as follows in 1795 by one of his students in a letter to another medical student in London:

> Dr Rush who you know is so indefatigable in theoretical pursuit tells us this season *that there is but one fever in the World.* That Fevers may arise from direct or indirect Debility; from Marsh or human effluvia, but that the Proximate cause is the same. That the multiplicity of fevers according to the system of many Nosologists has done immense mischief &c. That fever is an Unit. That all the different names of fever in the nomenclatures of Nosologists are only different modifications of one disease in the arterial System. That of this disease Plurisies & anginas are no more than symptoms; and that some symptoms occur in all fevers as Headach &c. That the Fevers which have been divided into continued, remittent, and intermittent are not distinct fevers, but so many

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> different states of fever, or so many species of one genus. He infers all this from many circumstances & elucidates the Whole by analogical Reasoning for which you know he is remarkably famous. The more you ponder on this the more I think you will find it to savour of reality & of the Simplicity of Nature.[71]

Rush tested his new system during the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 and was, he claimed, satisfied with its success. His medical opponents, on the other hand, were not, and observed that those of his patients who survived the ravages of fever, also miraculously survived, in some cases, the removal of four-fifths of all the blood in their bodies.[72] Rush wrote a famous account of the epidemic but did not, as he had been trained to do, keep an exact record of his own cases.[73]

According to Rush, physiological theory dealt with the mind under the heading of the external and internal senses. He posited nine mental faculties (or capacities) which he divided into three categories. In the first group was the moral faculty, comprised of the conscience and the sense of deity; in the second, the intellectual faculties which included the understanding, memory and the imagination; and in the third group, the passions, the will, and the sense of faith (or believing faculty).[74] Rush claimed that:

> all these internal senses are in every respect like the external senses in their origin and offices. They are all as torpid at birth as the eyes and the ears. They are all awakened by impressions, and their operations ... are as much the effects of specific motions, as the operations of the senses of touch, taste, smelling, seeing and hearing.[75]

Carlson explains that Rush's belief that each faculty was represented by a separate area in the brain was shared by the popular nineteenth-century movement commonly known as phrenology. This was, however, a term which Rush himself appears to have coined in order to describe his physiological psychology.[76]

Since physiology traditionally dealt with the functioning of living matter and consequently was not concerned with metaphysical abstractions, it did not have a developed terminology for analysing concepts such as 'life', 'soul', 'spirit' and 'mind', apart from their connection to real or hypothetical entities.[77] Rush, like many of his contemporaries, was, however, well aware that the problem of metaphysics posed difficulties, linguistic as well as religious, for the scientific study of the human mind. As he explained to his students,

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> Chemistry has been adulterated by its mixture with alchemy, astronomy has been adulterated by its mixture with astrology and religion has suffered from its mixture with mysticism, and phrenology has shared the same fate from its union with all the trash known by the name of metaphysicks. In imitation of the illustrious reformers who have separated the above sciences from their unnatural mixtures, I shall endeavor to separate phrenology, from all the Scholastic and unintelligible jargon of metaphysicks.[78]

William Cullen too had distinguished between the various meanings of the term 'metaphysics'. He wished above all to avoid the connotation of 'subtle disquisitions' and all that this entailed. For Cullen, metaphysics was, rather, an account of 'the Operations of the human mind in thinking' or 'a history' of the human mind,[79] and it is this Baconian-inspired view to which Rush referred when he spoke of his own science of 'phrenology'. He explained that

> From the science to which I have given that simple name, I reject the metaphysical ontology of the Schools, which has for its objects the properties of Spirit, or Being, in general, and shall confine myself exclusively to the history of the human mind.[80]

At the beginning of his lectures on the mind Rush defended his inclusion of the history of the human mind in a course of physiology. It was, he explained, not a novel idea but one which had previously been adopted by Boerhaave, Haller and John Gregory in their own lectures on the institutes of medicine.[81]

Rush's concern to avoid the consequences of a strictly materialist or immaterialist position is evident in all his lectures on the mind. If, as Carlson argues, he materialized the metaphysical faculty psychology of Thomas Reid, he nevertheless constructed his history of the mind according to the unmistakably religious perspective provided by David Hartley in his *Observations upon the Frame, Duties and Expectations of Man.*[82] Like Hartley, Rush traced the workings of the human mind to the impressions of external objects or forces on the nerves. These impressions in the form of 'vibrations' were, however, part of God's design. He assured his students that the history of the human mind did not require that they choose between the many theories which, on the one hand, argued for the materiality of the mind, or, on the other, its immateriality. His theory required only:

> that we believe that we have a mind, that it is acted on by the body, that the body is acted on by the mind, and that in its present connection with the body it cannot acquire a single idea, nor

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> perform a single act, without the intervention of bodily impressions.[83]

In all his medical writings Rush emphasized the connection of body and mind and the importance of the new mental science to the physician. In the eye of the physician, man was always to be viewed as 'a single indivisible being, for so intimately united are his soul and body, that one cannot be moved without the other'.[84] As we will see, Rush's view of the coherence of mind and body played a key role in his medical theory and provided the physiological basis for his account of sympathy and its role in the moral life of medicine.

Rush was one of the earliest medical professors to expound the ideas and doctrines of Franz Joseph Gall, the German anatomist, physiologist and founder of what was later called the phrenology movement.[85] Gall's theory of the mind traced the attributes of personality to the functions and development of the brain. His lectures on phrenology were a popular success on the Continent, but in Vienna in 1802 they were suppressed for being subversive to religion. In 1807 Gall, with his student and successor Johan Gasper Spurzheim, left Vienna and settled in Paris.

As Jan Goldstein explains in her recent study of the French psychiatric profession in the nineteenth century, Gall's theory of the mind rested on the twin phrenological doctrines of 'organology' and 'cranioscopy'.

> The first doctrine held that all human mental characteristics, including both 'intellectual faculties' and 'feelings,' were innate and determined by the size of the relevant controlling organs of the brain, some 28 or 30 to 40 of which had been located. The second doctrine held that the size of the brain organs was discoverable by noting the shape of the skull and especially any protuberances, since the cranium was supposed to correspond closely to the contours of the brain it housed.[86]

In his lectures on the faculties or capacities of the mind Rush taught that Gall had ascertained the seats of many faculties and also:

> the seats and marks of the following moral and intellectual qualities. Parental and filial love, friendship, good nature, prudence, constancy, courage, loftiness, wit, vain glory, vanity, cupidity or theft, cunning, fighting, cruelty, memory for words, for numbers, for places, and talents for music, for the mechanic arts, for rhetoric, and for metaphysicks.[87]

Rush was, it appears, generally sympathetic to Gall's theory and he judged it to be at least 'probable'. He nevertheless brought to the

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attention of his students the findings of a recent unfavourable inquiry into the work of Gall and Spurzheim. This was the 1808 commission led by Georges Cuvier, the French naturalist. Other members of this group included Philippe Pinel and Jacques Tenon,[88] with whose work Rush was also familiar. He explained that Gall had suggested applications for his new science to both education and medicine and remarked that in:

> the former it may be useful; for if the brain by its growth fixes the moral and intellectual character in the bones of the skull, it will be difficult to change it after adult life. In childhood it may be done by exciting counter talents and passions to those we wish to weaken or destroy.[89]

Despite his misgivings, which he carefully explained, Rush concluded that Gall's ideas should 'not be considered as foreign to the history of the mind'. They were referred to throughout his lectures in order to illustrate 'how much and how often the mind sympathizes with the brain in all its moral and intellectual exercises'.[90] Like the followers of Gall, Rush postulated certain faculties which were innate or God-given. He did not, however, accept the doctrine of innate ideas. The corporealized faculties were, he emphasized, merely inherent *capacities*.[91] With Locke, he insisted that there was 'nothing in the understanding which was not first in the senses' and, like both Locke and Reid, he was inclined to stress the psychological unity and equality of all men rather than their inherent diversity. Each person, in this view, must discover his or her own God-given capacities and put them to good use. He believed that the physician-educator was particularly well qualified to act as guide in this task. Indeed, its importance to the overall moral life of the community transformed this knowledge and skill into a moral duty. Early education was for Rush the crucial factor in human development, and like the later phrenologists, he proposed systems of education that would shape the faculties of young minds to meet the needs of the new republic.

The Full Scope of Medicine

According to Rush's theory of mind, morality does not originate exclusively in experience. Each of us possesses a rudimentary moral faculty. This faculty, capacity, or organ is not, as Reid postulated, merely a metaphysical entity but a physical one activated by something like Hartley's system of vibrations. While the moral faculty is connected to the body so that the states of one affect the

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other, it is the body which is accessible to the physician and the key to treating the diseases of the moral faculty. Since Rush believed that all diseases of the mind were physiologically based, he warned it was as useless to attack the 'vices' or diseases of the mind with lectures on morality as it was to berate a person sick with fever. Mental 'vices' could be cured only by medical means.[92] Rush's phrenology, like the later phrenological movement, was thus an attempt to explain the moral and intellectual nature of humanity. It was designed to provide a theoretical rationale for programmes of social reform that relied on medicine, and it offered a reassuringly orthodox religious basis for an exploration of the mind.[93]

Rush, like many contemporary medical theorists, possessed a seemingly unshakeable confidence in the rise and progress of medicine. Moreover, he believed that the success of medicine and medical science in decreasing the number and mitigating the evils of once-incurable diseases should encourage physicians to search even harder for similar cures to alleviate the moral ills of mankind.[94] These triumphs of medicine, he suggested, were the outcome of the industry and ingenuity of natural science, and he saw no reason why this great enterprise should not likewise be applied to morality. He was:

> fully persuaded, that from the combined action of causes, which operate at once upon the reason, the moral faculty, the passions, the senses, the brain, the nerves, the blood and the heart, it is possible to produce such a change in the moral character of man, as shall raise him to a resemblance of angels – nay more, to the likeness of God himself.[95]

Hitherto the cultivation of the moral faculty had been the private concern of parents, schoolmasters and divines. But if the principles of a science of the mind are correct, should it not be the business of the legislator, the scientist and the physician to encourage the culture of morals and to undertake experiments for their improvement? Needless to say, Rush's answer to this question was affirmative and, in what follows, we will explore the implications of Rush's science of the mind or phrenology for the physician and his professional duties, particularly for the physician who would, hand in hand with the legislator and the scientist, help to create a healthy and happy society. The pursuit of happiness was, after all, a fundamental right of the new constitution, and happiness was, in Rush's eye, nothing less than the moral, intellectual and physical well-being of the individual in society.

In 1805 Rush gave an introductory lecture to his students which

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he titled, On the Utility of a Knowledge of the Faculties and Operations of the Human Mind, to a Physician.[96] In this work he explicated the uses of his mental science to the physician in his practice as well as 'to the physician in his role as a citizen and a man'. For Rush, as for his predecessors, knowledge of the faculties and operations of the mind opened to the physician a new set of duties with regard to his patient.

> It is calculated to teach him, that in feeling the pulse, inspecting the eyes and tongue, examining the state of the excretions, and afterwards prescribing according to their different conditions, he performs but half his duty in a sick room. To render his prescriptions successful, he should pry into the state of his patient's mind, and so regulate his conduct and conversation, as to aid the operation of his physical remedies.[97]

Rush thought that the physician should acquire the confidence of his patients and, through a greater understanding of their inner states, respond sympathetically to their particular fears, idiosyncrasies, and insecurities. By doing so, he would be better able to inspire his patients with hope for their own recovery and faith in their healer – but only in so far, Rush warned, 'as the truth would allow'. In an earlier lecture on the duties of a physician, Rush made some interesting observations about truth and the role of the human will in medicine, adding a new twist on the benevolent deception we met in Gregory and Percival:

> The extent of the influence of the will over the human body has not yet been fully ascertained. I reject the futile pretentions of Mr. Mesmer to the cure of diseases, by what he has absurdly called animal magnetism. But I am willing to derive the same advantages from his deceptions, which the chemists have derived from the delusions of the alchemists. The facts which he has established clearly prove the influence of the imagination, and will, upon diseases. Let us avail ourselves of the handle which those faculties of the mind present to us, in the strife between life and death. I have frequently prescribed remedies of doubtful efficacy in the critical stage of acute diseases, but never till I had worked up my patients into a confidence, bordering upon certainty, of their probably good effects. The success of this measure has much oftener answered, than disappointed my expectations; and while my patients have commended the vomit, the purge, or the blister, which was prescribed, I have been disposed to attribute their recovery to the vigorous concurrence of the *will* in the action of the medicine.[98]

The physician versed in Rush's phrenology had other arrows in his

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therapeutic quiver. He could apply his knowledge of the principles of the association of ideas to the removal of those false associations which were so painful to his patients. In a lecture on the subject Rush explained that these mental associations,

> like the bodily sympathies, are natural, and morbid; and as disease creates and multiplies sympathies that did not exist in health, so delirium, madness, and dreams create a thousand associations of ideas, all unrelated to each other, that do not occur in the healthy state of the mind.[99]

When Rush adapted the principles of his associationist psychology to the treatment of the insane, the act of prying into the patient's minds became the basis for what was referred to as 'the moral management of the insane'. This was to become the new orthodoxy of asylum medicine, or at least of those institutions under the governorship of the enlightened and humane gentleman-physician. Rush believed that in the condition of mania it was the velocity of over-heated ideas in the mind which caused their false association. Once they combined and laid down new 'tracks' – or neurological networks of the brain – such perverse associations blocked the orderly and natural succession of ideas in their train. In the condition of melancholia, for example, 'the heavy fixity of thoughts, hardened the mind into new tracks, derived not from nature, but from a fanciful connection of ideas by a morbid habit'.[100] According to Rush, the intellectually deranged could be divided into two groups: those who were partially insane and those who suffered from a general intellectual disorder. Partial insanity could take the form of either hypochondria or melancholia with symptoms of disturbed thinking or delusion. General intellectual derangement was found in cases of delirium or acute forms of mania. There were also diseases of the memory associated with ageing. Young persons who suffered from memory impairment were designated as fatuous or idiots.[101]

Apart from the regular bleeding and purging treatments, Rush believed that part of the business of the physician or asylum governor with his patients was

> to divert them from conversing upon all the subjects upon which they had been deranged, to tell them pleasant stories, to read them select passages from entertaining books, and to oblige them to read to him; to superintend their labours of body and mind; to preside at the table at which they take their meals, to protect them from rudeness and insults from their keepers, to walk and ride with them, to partake with them in their amusements, and to regulate

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